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Critical digital literacy for teachers: Evaluating pedagogical models, support systems, and policy implications in a hybrid learning era

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Abstract

This article presents a systematic literature review of CDL in teacher education, emphasizing hybrid and multimodal learning environments. Drawing on sociocultural theory, multiliteracies pedagogy, and critical pedagogy, the study examines 78 peer-reviewed articles published between 2016 and 2025. The analysis identifies six core themes: pedagogical innovations, teacher competencies and professional development, institutional support and policy, equity and inclusion, hybrid learning challenges, and psycho-affective impacts. Findings show that while CDL fosters reflective, ethical, and participatory engagement with digital tools, its implementation is hindered by infrastructural disparities, inconsistent policies, and limited teacher preparation. The study highlights the need for context-responsive frameworks, professional support systems, and culturally inclusive practices. It offers theoretical and practical insights for advancing CDL as a transformative component of teacher education in the digital era.